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MAYOR, INFRASTRUCTURE ADVISORY COMMISSION GATHER FEEDBACK ON KEY INITIATIVES AT PUBLIC MEETING

Commission discusses utility transfer, RebuildIndy and parking modernization

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard and the Infrastructure Advisory Commission (IAC) held a public meeting this evening at the Garfield Park Arts Center to discuss several ongoing initiatives of the administration which, if enacted, will help fund much-needed infrastructure improvements throughout the City. The meeting included a brief presentation by members of the Ballard administration featuring current City projects including the City's utility transfer to Citizen's Energy Group, RebuildIndy, as well as a review of the current plans to modernize parking management and technology.

"During these tough economic times, we have been challenged to create innovative solutions to our infrastructure problems that use our resources wisely while delivering better services," said Mayor Ballard. "I can proudly say we have many bold initiatives that will improve the state of our city for years to come, without passing the cost to our residents and taxpayers."

Members of the public were encouraged to voice their questions and opinions during the evening's question and answer session which opened the floor for conversation on all three initiatives. Key among those was the City's current Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to modernize and consolidate the management of parking assets.

"Our goal with this project is to see what opportunities are out there to streamline the non-uniform and outdated parking system we currently utilize," said Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Michael Huber. "By modernizing the current technology and consolidating the contracts on lots and garages, we hope to spur turnover at meters and increase economic development in our downtown and in Broad Ripple all while using funds to make much-needed infrastructure improvements to those areas which need it most."

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During the meeting, City officials shared a plan to potentially increase meter rates and hours, which must be addressed to improve the parking system and ensure meter turnover. Currently, meter rates are \$0.75 per hour and have not been increased since 1975. Because of this, possible meter rate structures being considered range from \$1 to \$1.50 per hour, depending on location of the meter. These potential rates were formulated by referencing parking analysis completed by Indianapolis Downtown Inc. and Walker Parking Consultants. The City-County Council would maintain oversight on any changes to locations, hours and rates under the current negotiations.

Among other issues covered, the IAC continued public conversation on the planned transfer of water and wastewater to Citizens Energy Group and RebuildIndy, the City's initiative which will invest more than \$425 million to rebuild deteriorating thoroughfares, residential streets, sidewalks, and bridges, as well as address neighborhood drainage and flooding issues and demolish unsalvageable abandoned homes that pose a public safety threat to neighborhoods. Infrastructure improvements will create local jobs and ultimately increase public safety for neighborhoods and residents, which support Mayor Ballard's commitment to make Indianapolis a more livable city.

Mayor Ballard created the four-member IAC in February 2009 and charged them with developing an honest assessment of the challenges faced by the city due to the critical infrastructure needs by devising long-term recommendations and solutions to Indianapolis' infrastructure needs. The Commission acts as a sounding board for the community on ideas Indianapolis residents may have about how infrastructure problems can be solved while looking at innovative ideas that are being put to practice in other communities.

"It's clear that we have many infrastructure wants and needs in Indianapolis that would be nearly impossible to meet without additional resources such as those that can come from the administration's current initiatives," said IAC Chairman Bill Blomquist, Dean of the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI. "While those additional resources give us the opportunity to make real progress, even they are not unlimited. We'll still have to weigh our needs against our capabilities, and as we on the IAC listen to our fellow citizens that responsibility is what we will keep in mind."

Members of the IAC include Chairman Bill Blomquist, Dean of the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI; Todd Stuart, Vice President of Stuart's Moving and Storage; Mike Hudson, Chairman of IPOWER Energy Systems, LLC; and the newly appointed Dr. Jackie Greenwood of Indianapolis Public Schools.

For more information on the IAC visit www.indy.gov/mayor/iac.

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